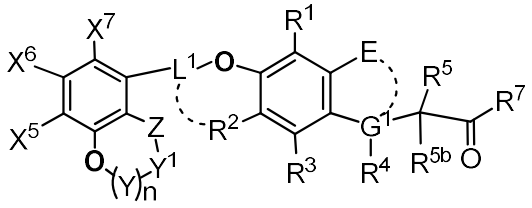
CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A compound of formula IIb:



IIb

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof,

wherein:

n = 0, Y does not exist, and Y^1 is directly single bonded to the oxygen adjacent (ortho-) to Y to form a five-membered heterocyclic group;

Y^1 is selected from the group consisting of $-CH_2-$, $-CHF-$, $-CF_2-$ and $-C(CH_3)_2-$;

E is directly connected to G^1 to form a cyclic compound, G^1 is -C-, E is $-OC(R_cR_d)-$, where Rc and Rd are each independently hydrogen;

L^1 is $-CH_2-$;

R^1, R^2 and R^3 are each independently hydrogen, halogen, alkyl or alkoxy group;

R^4 is hydrogen,

R^5 is hydrogen, halogen, hydroxyl, amino, alkylamino, alkyl or alkoxy group;

R^{5b} is hydrogen, halogen, alkyl or alkoxy group;

R^7 is selected from the group consisting of hydroxyl, alkoxy, alkyl amino, cycloalkyl amino, heterocyclic amino, alkyl sulfonamido, cycloalkyl sulfonamido, aryloxy, heterocyclic aryloxy, aryl amino, and heterocyclic aryl amino;

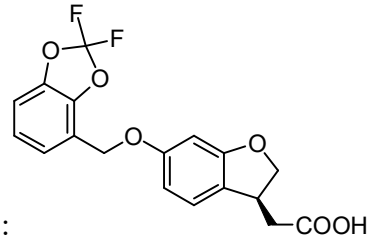
X^5 is hydrogen, deuterium(D), halogen, nitrile, amino, trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethoxy, alkyl, alkoxy, alkylamino (NR_iR_j), alkylcarbonylamino, alkylaminocarbonylamino, alkoxycarbonylamino, cycloalkoxycarbonylamino, alkylsulfonamido, cycloalkylsulfonamido, aryl, or aryloxycarbonylamino group; wherein R_i and R_j are each independently hydrogen, alkyl, alkylcarbonyl, alkoxycarbonyl, or cycloalkoxycarbonyl group;

X^6 and X^7 are each independently hydrogen, deuterium(D), halogen, C_1-C_8

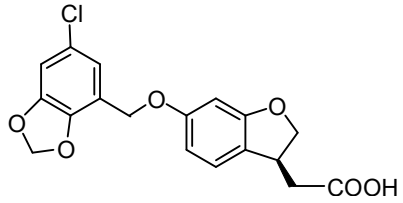
alkylamine group or C_1-C_8 alkoxycarbonylamino group;

Z is -O-; and wherein

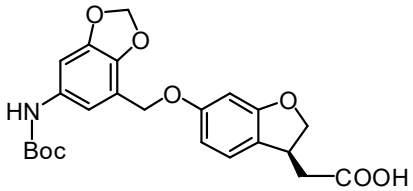
the compound is selected from the groups consisting of the following structures:



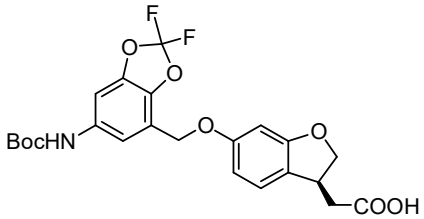
IIb-18



IIb-25



IIb-43



IIb-46.

2. A composition comprising the compound according to claim 1, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent and/or excipient.

3. The compound according to claim 1 for use as a GPR40 agonist.

4. The composition according to claim 2, for use as a GPR40 agonist.

5. The compound according to claims 1 for use in treating or preventing diabetes or a related metabolic syndrome.

6. The compound for use according to claim 5, wherein the diabetes is type II diabetes.

7. The composition according to claim 2 for use in treating or preventing diabetes or a related metabolic syndrome.

8. The compound for use according to claim 7, wherein the diabetes is type II diabetes.